

27 March 2004

BBC Charter Review Consultation
Department for Culture, Media and Sport
2-4 Cockspur Street, London SW1Y 5DH

What do you value most about the BBC?

I value most Radio 4, Radio 3 and the World Service. Radio 4 especially for news and current affairs, drama, consumer affairs and general interest programmes. A programme like *From our own correspondent* I find much sharper and less personally promoting than an equivalent on TV. Radio 3, with all its slightly downmarket faults, is unsurpassed as a channel for classical and new music (mainly serious). The World Service is incomparable and gains much needed respect for this country all over the world.

Should the BBC run commercial services?

Yes, this is a legitimate activity.

How should we pay for the BBC?

Cannot think of a better alternative to the licence fee and do not begrudge paying it, even though I rarely watch TV.

How should the BBC be run/regulated?

Much as it is at the moment. Recent events have caused unnecessary panic at the BBC.

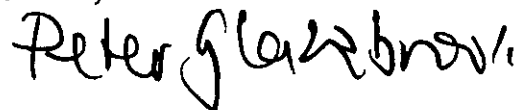
How do we ensure that the BBC is properly accountable to the public and Parliament?

All political parties, especially when in government, suspect the BBC of bias against them. Intelligent governments are aware of this and should refrain from interfering with the BBC, ruling out, say, frequent communications from the office of 10 Downing Street.

In general, I approve the standard set by the BBC, and resent recent political interference and government bullying tactics.

I recommend that the Culture Secretary should spend six months in the country of her choice in Europe or across the Atlantic. On return she would weep for joy at the institution that, though far from faultless, maintains a standard that is envied world wide.

The independence of the BBC is essential to democracy in this country.



Peter Glazebrook